



THE SAVVY CONSUMER COLUMN

The Savvy Consumer

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Keep your cool: Choose reliable air conditioning repair companies

NASHVILLE, TN – With the temperatures reaching into the triple digits this summer, it is more important than ever to have a working, reliable air conditioning unit. Scam artists know this and use the rise in the heat to take advantage of consumers by charging for unnecessary repair work.

“Consumers should always check the warranty before making any repairs,” said Consumer Affairs Director Gary Cordell. “It is important to be an educated consumer and to do your homework before spending any money on repairs.”

Cordell suggests that consumers:

- Ask for written statements.
- Beware of ads whose quoted prices seem too cheap to be true.
- Get multiple quotes.
- Research the company and make sure the company lists a physical address.
- Never pay money upfront.
- Be wary if told they need to replace several components at once.
- Do not accept quotes for repairs of new units over the phone. It is impossible to know how much a new unit or repair will cost without first seeing the problem in person.
- Try to avoid having work done after hours or on weekends to avoid paying for overtime.
- Beware of ads for free cleanings or tune-ups. This can lead to recommendations for costly repairs that are not required and to customers being pressured to replace units, or significantly marking up the price on replacement parts.
- Be on guard for having to add refrigerant to their air unit every spring. This could be a scam. Any reputable contractor will detect a leak through a pressure test or dye, and will repair the leak. An air conditioning system should never leak refrigerant regularly.
- Always check the buyer beware list, <http://tn.gov/consumer/buyer beware.shtml> to see if the company being considered has had problems in the past. Companies most often are placed on the list for being unresponsive to complaints filed with Consumer Affairs.

Consumer Affairs (www.tn.gov/consumer/) is a division of the Department of Commerce and Insurance (www.tn.gov/commerce/), which works to protect consumers while ensuring fair competition for industries and professionals who do business in Tennessee. www.tn.gov/commerce/, [@TNCommerceInsur](https://twitter.com/TNCommerceInsur) (Twitter), <http://on.fb.me/uFQwUZ> (Facebook), <http://bit.ly/ry1GyX> (YouTube)

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